

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-20 (Canceled).

Please add the following new claims:

21. (New) A shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor containing a catalytically active component or a precursor thereof, supported on a carrier, which carrier is an elongated shaped particle comprising three to six protrusions,

said particle comprising two protrusions, each protrusion extending from and attached to a central position, wherein the central position is aligned along the longitudinal axis of the particle, to which protrusions one to four additional protrusions are attached;

the cross-section of two protrusions attached to a central position occupying the space encompassed by the outer edges of six circles around a central circle, each of the six circles touching two neighbouring circles whilst two alternating circles are equidistant to the central circle and may be attached to the central circle and the two circles adjacent to the two alternating circles, but not the common circle touching the central circle, minus the space occupied by the four remaining outer circles and including four remaining interstitial regions;

the one to four additional protrusions, each attached to a protrusion as defined above, each being defined in the same way as above, the protrusion to which an additional protrusion is attached becoming the new central circle, and the original central circle becoming the other protrusion.

22. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 wherein the carrier comprises three or four protrusions;

said particle comprising two protrusions, each protrusion extending from and attached to a central position, wherein the central position is aligned along the longitudinal axis of the particle, to which protrusions one or two additional protrusions are attached.

23. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 having a cross-section wherein the three to six protrusions have diameters in the range between 0.74 and 1.3 times the diameter of the central circle.

24. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 having a cross-section wherein the three to six protrusions have diameters in the range between 0.87 and 1.15 times the diameter of the central circle.

25. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 in which the angle between the two lines connecting the centers of three adjacent circles is between 90° and 180° or between 270° and 180°.

26. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 in which the angle between the two lines connecting the centers of three adjacent circles is between 110° and 150° or between 210° and 250°.

27. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 wherein the component is selected from the group consisting of elements of Group VIII of the Periodic Table of the Elements.

28. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 27 wherein the carrier is a refractory oxide.

29. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 27 containing an element or compound selected from the group consisting of Group IIA, IIIB, IVB, VB, VIB, VIIIB and VIII of the Periodic Table of the Elements.

30. (New) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 21 wherein the catalyst has been made by extrusion.

31. (New) The shaped catalyst of claim 21 wherein the component is cobalt.

32. (New) The shaped catalyst of claim 21 wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of silica, alumina and titania.

33. (New) The shaped catalyst of claim 21 wherein the component is cobalt and the carrier is titania.